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LOUISIANA NURSERY TALES.

II.

III. POSSON DORÉ.¹

YAVÉ inne fois inne jene fille qui té gagnin inne l'amoureux, cété inne bel jene nomme, inne prince, mé papa li té pas oulé jene nomme té fé li l'amour. Li couri trouvé inne vié zombi ki té resté dans bois. Li dit : *tan pri, zombi, fé jene nomme là laissé mo fille, mo vé pas yé marié.*

Inne jou, jene fille la et jene nomme la té assite coté flève, zombi vini, li fé jene nomme la tournain posson é galopé dans dolo.

Papa li té cré ké jene fille là sré blié jene nomme là, astère li té posson. Li té pli gardé après yé, mais tou les jou jene fille la té couri assite coté flève, et li té chanté ; "*Caliwa, wa, caliwa, co ; waco, maman dit oui ; waco papa dit non, caliwa, wa, caliwa, co ; sitôt li té chanté ça dolo té ouvri et inne bel posson rouge avec inne couronne en or en haut so la tête, té vini coté jene fille là ; li té porté li gato, zorange, dépomme, pou li mangé.*

Papa la oua ké so fille couri assite coté flève tou lé jou ; inne jour li guetté li et li oua ça li tapé fé. Lendémin li porté so fisi é quand jene fille chanté é bel posson la vini, li tchoué li é li porté li ché li pou tchui li. . . . Yé di jene fille la qué li té gagnin pou tchui posson là.

Quand li prend li pou coupé li, posson commencé chanté : "*Coupé moin donc, wa, wa, coupé moin donc, wa, wa. Gratté moin donc wa, wa, gratté moin donc, wa, wa. Brassé moin donc, wa, wa. Mettez di sel wa, wa. . . .*

Après, quand posson là té tchui, yé metté li on la table. Jéne fille li té pa oulé mangé ; li tapé crié pou so posson, mais papa li té si gourmand li mangé si boucou qué so vente*crévé et plein petit posson sorti la dans é chapé dans flève.

Après dinin jene fille li couri assite la où yé té jété lécaïl so posson ; li crié si boucou ké la terre ouvri et li parti dans trou là pou couri coté so posson. Quand so maman vini cherché li li oua jisse boute so chivé qui tapé sorti dans la terre la.²

¹ This is quite a fairy tale. The most interesting part of it is the songs which the young girl sings to her fish, and those which the fish sings while being cut and salted.

² *Boute so chivé qui tapé sorti dans la terre la.* "When the mother arrived she saw only one lock of her daughter's hair, which was coming out of the earth." A very comical ending to an otherwise pathetic story. This reminds us of the buffoonery in the Miracle Plays of the Middle Ages. Rude and uncultivated people always join the ridiculous to the sublime.

POSSON DORÉ (THE GOLDEN FISH).

There was once a young girl who had a lover. It was a fine young man, a prince, but the father did not want him to court his daughter. He went to see an old wizard, who lived in the woods, and said to him: "I pray you, wizard, make that young man leave my daughter alone. I do not want them to marry."

One day the young girl and the young man were seated on the river bank; the wizard came and changed the young man into a fish, which jumped into the water.

The father thought that the young girl would forget the young man, now that he was a fish, and he did not watch her any more; but every day the young girl would sit on the river bank and sing: "Caliwa wa, caliwa co; waco, maman dit oui; waco, papa dit non; caliwa wa, caliwa co."

As soon as she sang that the water opened, and a beautiful red fish, with a golden crown on his head, came near the young girl. He brought her cakes, oranges, apples, for her to eat.

The father perceived that the young girl went every day to the river bank. One day he watched her, and saw what she was doing. The next day he brought his gun with him, and when the girl sang, and the beautiful fish came, he killed it, and took it home to cook it.

The young girl was told to cook the fish. When she took it to cut it, the fish began to sing: "Cut me then, wa, wa; scrape me then, wa, wa; mix me then, wa, wa; put some salt, wa, wa."

When the fish was cooked they placed it on the table. The young girl did not want to eat, and cried for her fish; but the father was so greedy and ate so much that his belly burst, and a quantity of little fishes came out and escaped to the water.

After the dinner the young girl went to sit down on the river bank, where they had thrown the scales of her fish. She wept so much that the earth opened, and she disappeared in the hole to go to meet her fish. When her mother came to look for her, she saw only one lock of her daughter's hair which was coming out of the earth.

IV. "GIVE ME."¹

Ein foi, yé té gagnin ein jene madame ki té resté dan ein bel la mison. Li té maré dipi lontan, mé li té pa gagnin piti. Ein jou, li té appiyé on balistrade so la garli, li oua ein vié fame ki tapé pacé avé

¹ It is strange to find a story in the Creole patois with an English title; but this is the only thing English it has about it. It seems rather to have had an Oriental origin, as may be supposed from the romantic element and the marvelous which we find in it; it is certainly a tale of some interest, whatever may have been the country which gave birth to it.

ein pagnin dépomme on so latête. Can madame la oua bel dépomme yé, li té envi manzé ein ; li pélé vié fame la et li di li ké li oulé acheté ein dépomme. Vié marchan la té pa oulé vende, mé li donnin madame la ein, et li di li :

“ Mo conin ké vou envi gagnin ein piti ; manzé dépomme la et demain matin vou sra moman ein bel garçon.”

Jene fame la pren dépomme la, li ri et li pliché li. Li jété lapo yé dan la cou é manzé dépomme. Vié fame la té pa menti ; dans la nouite, jene madame la gagnin ein bel garçon, et ça qui plice drole, cé ké ein jiment ki té laché dan la cou, manzé lapo dépomme, et li ausite gagnin ein piti dan la nouite.

Jéne madame la té ben conten gagnin ein piti, et li di ké com piti choal la té né minme la nouite ké so piti garçon, li sré fé li cado li.

Yé tou lé dé grandi ensemb et yé té linmin yé minme boucou. Com ti choal la té né par ein mirac, li té capab sellé, bridé san personne touché li. Can piti garçon la té oulé monté li, li crié : “ Sellé, bridé, mo piti choal,” et li vini tou souite prête pou yé monté li.

Can garçon la vini ein nomme li fatigué resté ché so moman et li parti cherché zaventire. Li pa di personne ou lapé couri, li monté so choal et voyagé boucou, jiska li rivé dan pays ein grand roi.

Ein soi li rivé coté ein bel la mison ; yé di li cété demère roi et ké li té gagnin ein ben joli frè.

Jene nomme la té envi oua la princesse ; aussite li descende so choal et fé li disparaite, pasqué mo té doite di vou, ké choal la té capab disparaite can so maite té oulé et li minme té capab chanzé so zabi can li oulé et pren kékéfoi linge ein mendian, et kékéfoi linge ein prince. Jou cila, li pren linge ein mendian, et couri coté la kisine.

Li fé com si li té pa capab parlé ben, et tou ça yé té di li, li té réponne ein frase : “ *Give me.*” Yé mandé li “ To soif ” — “ *Give me* ” — “ To faim ” — “ *Give me.*” Yé pélé li “ *Give me* ” et yé permette li couché dans la kisin et dans la cende la chiminin. Li idé domestique lé roi ki té cré li té idio.

Tou la simaine, *Give me* resté dan la kisine, mé can dimanche rivé et tou moune parti pou la messe, li metté so pli bel zabi, li ordonnin so choal paraite sellé, bridé, et li commencé galopé dans tou jardin lé roi. Li cassé pot flères, piti nabe, arien té capab rété li.

Même jou la, frè lé roi té malade et li pa couri la messe. Li resté la mison et li gardé dan jardin dan la finéte. Li oua *Give me* et trouvé li ben joli.

Give me rété galopé dan jardin can li cré la messe té presque fini. Li fé so choal disparaite et li couri dan la kisine encor, où li répranne so zabis mendian.

Tan lé roi révini la messe, li té firié oua tou déga yé té fé dan so jardin. Li mandé so domestique layé, mé yé di ké *Give me* té sel

moune ki té resté la mison. Lé roi questionnin li, mé li toujou réponne "*Give me.*"

Dimanche apé ça minme kichoge rivé, et fie lé roi resté encor la mison pou oua *Give me*. Lé roi té si colère ké li di li gagnin pou trapé canaille laki apé bimin so jardin. Troisième dimanche, li pa couri la messe, mé li caché dan la mison, et li trapé *Give me* billé com ein prince, apé galopé dan jardin on so choal.

Lé roi té ben étonnin é li mendé bel jene nomme la raconter so listoire.

Give me di li comment li té né, et li fé paraite et disparaite so choal comme li oulé, et li changé so zabis comme li oulé. Li di lé roi ké li amouré so fie et mandé so la main. Lé roi di oui, et *Give me* maré princesse la, et voyé cherché so moman.

Yé vive lontan et yé té benhére pasqué côté ein bon vié zombi ki té donnin moman *Give me* dépomme pou manzé.

"GIVE ME."

Once there was a lady who resided in a beautiful house. She had been married a long time, but had no children. One day that she was standing on her gallery, she saw an old woman who was passing with a basket of apples on her head. When the lady saw the beautiful apples she wished to eat one; she called the old woman, and told her that she wanted to buy an apple. The old merchant-woman did not want to sell an apple, but she gave one to the lady, and said :

"I know that you wish to have a child; eat this apple, and to-morrow you will be the mother of a beautiful boy."

The young woman took the apple, laughing, and pared it. She threw the peel in the yard, and ate the apple.

The old woman had not lied: during the night the lady gave birth to a fine boy, and what is very strange is that a mare which was in the yard ate the apple-peels, and she had a foal during the night.

The lady was very glad to have a child, and she said that as the little horse was born the same night as the little boy, it should be his property.

Both grew up together, and they loved each other very much. As the little horse was born through a miracle, he could be saddled and bridled without any one touching him. When the boy wanted to ride, he cried: "Saddle and bridle, my little horse!" and the horse came immediately, all ready to be mounted.

When the boy grew up, he was tired of remaining at his mother's, and set out to seek adventures. He said to no one where he was going, mounted his horse, and travelled for a long time, until he arrived in the country of a great king.

One evening, he came to a beautiful house; they told him that it was the residence of the king, and that he had a very pretty daughter.

The young man wanted to see the princess, therefore he descended from his horse and made him disappear ; for I ought to have told you that the horse could disappear whenever his master wished it, and he himself could change his clothes according to his desire, taking sometimes the clothes of a beggar, and sometimes the clothes of a prince.

On that day, he dressed like a beggar, and went towards the kitchen. He acted as if he could not speak well, and every time they spoke to him he answered but two words : "Give me." "You are hungry?" "Give me." — "You are thirsty?" "Give me." They called him *Give me*, and they allowed him to sleep in the kitchen, in the ashes. He helped the servants of the king, and they thought he was an idiot.

The whole week, *Give me* remained in the kitchen, but when Sunday came, and every one had gone to mass, he put on his best clothes, ordered his horse to appear with saddle and bridle, and began to gallop all over the garden of the king. He broke the flower-pots, the young plants ; nothing could stop him. On that very day the daughter of the king was sick, and she did not go to mass. She remained at home, and looked in the garden through the window. She saw *Give me*, and she found him very handsome.

Give me stopped galloping in the garden when he thought the mass was almost finished. He made his horse disappear, and went back to the kitchen with his beggar's clothes.

When the king came back, he was furious to see the damage which had been done in his garden. He summoned his servants, but they said that *Give me* was the only person who had remained at home. The king questioned him, but he replied all the time, "*Give me*."

The next Sunday, the same thing happened again, and the daughter of the king remained at home to see *Give me*. The king was so angry that he said he would catch the rascal who was spoiling his garden. On the third Sunday he did not go to mass, but he hid himself in the house. He caught *Give me*, who was dressed like a prince and galloping in the garden on his horse.

The king was very much astonished, and he asked the handsome young man to relate his story.

Give me told him how he was born, and made his horse appear and disappear, and changed his clothes at his will.

He told the king that he was in love with his daughter, and asked her in marriage. The king said yes, and *Give me* married the princess and sent for his mother.

They lived a long time, and were very happy, because it was a good old witch who had given *Give me's* mother the apple to eat.

Alcée Fortier.